

October 19, 2010

MEMO:

TO: Board of Road Commissioners
FROM: Jim Iwanicki
RE: New County Primary Road

DISCUSSION:

A Public hearing regarding this issue was held on October 7, 2010. Written comments have also been received both before and after the public hearing; those comments have been passed on to you.

The following are key points that I think are important in the decision making process:

1. The Road Commission is responsible for all public local and primary roads, other than state highways, outside city limits in Marquette County.
2. The four township governments (Ely, Champion, Humboldt, and Michigamme) which are directly impacted by this project are supportive of the project.
3. Additional local governments that are indirectly involved are also supportive of this project. (Marquette County Board, Marquette Township, Powell Township, Republic Township, Richmond Township, Marquette Township, City of Marquette).
4. The Road Commission does not always do things in our best interest. Many times we do what is in the local government's best interest and the public's best interest. Examples of this are listed below:
 - a. Accepting the roads at KI Sawyer. (Additional miles of road along with all the problems that came with the system)
 - b. Sponsor Enhancement Grant applications. (Iron Ore Heritage and Little Trout Lake Bike Path project)
 - c. Accepting new subdivisions (2.6 miles in the last 5 years)
 - d. Superior Extrusion – (2010 additional mileage)
 - e. Target Road (New CR 492)
 - f. Plowing seasonal roads for the logging industry.
 - g. Commerce Drive extension.
5. This project involves legitimate environmental concerns.
6. The project will decrease potential truck traffic in the City of Marquette, CR 550, and the US-41 corridor.
7. Public highway safety as well as public emergency services will benefit with this project.
8. There are short term and long term financial considerations involved in the design, construction, and maintenance of this project.

It must be noted that if the Board decides to move forward with this project, this is just the start of a decision making process. Additional questions will be brought to the Board for your input and I would see the need for additional public hearings.

RECOMMENDATION:

In making my recommendation, I took into consideration all the views expressed at the public hearing, the additional written comments, our policies, and our responsibility as the Marquette County Road Commission to provide a safe and efficient county road system within our budgetary constraints.

Therefore, I recommend that the Board pass the following resolution:

Whereas, it is the responsibility of the Marquette County Road Commission to provide a safe and efficient county road system,

Whereas, a public need for a new road has been identified and established by the Marquette County Road Commission, the County Board of Marquette, and all four affected townships (Champion, Ely, Humboldt, and Michigamme),

Whereas, a public need for a new road has been identified by other local government agencies such as the City of Marquette, Powell Township, and Marquette Township that are indirectly affected,

Whereas, developing a new all-season primary county road to run north-south beginning at the intersection of US-41/CR FY northerly to CR IAA is in the public's best interest,

Whereas, the need for the new county road lies within a corridor within 2 miles on either side of the following area: Humboldt Township: T47N-R29W Section 2; Champion Township: T48N-R29W Sections 35, 26, 23, 14, 11, and 2, T49N-R29W Sections 35, 26, 23, 14, 11, and 2; Michigamme Township: T50N-R29W Sections 35, 26, 23, 14, and 11(See Attached Map),

Whereas, the purpose of the new all-season county primary road is to provide enhanced year-round vehicle access to the adjoining lands in the north central portion of Marquette County,

Whereas, this new road will provide additional recreational opportunities to the public as well as provide a direct benefit to the timber, mining, and gravel industries,

Whereas, highway public safety, emergency response, and emergency services will be significantly enhanced,

Whereas, a new road in this area will affect traffic volumes and patterns, especially heavy truck traffic, along US-41/M-28, CR 510, CR 550, the roads and streets in the City of Marquette, CR 492 (Wright Street), CR 502, and CR 573,

Whereas, a new road will affect noise quality, air quality, and water quality along the proposed route and also on existing routes,

Whereas, a new road in this corridor will impact the environment including but not limited to streams, wetlands and wildlife,

Whereas, a new road might impact historical sites,

Whereas, a new road will take considerable resources to design, construct, and maintain,

Whereas, private firms and other governmental entities might be able to mitigate the cost of developing a new road,

Now therefore let it be resolved that the Marquette County Road Commission recognizes that it is in the public's best interest to create a new all-season primary county road to run north-south beginning at the intersection of US-41/CR FY northerly to CR IAA and the name of the route shall be known as CR 595,

Also, let it be resolved that the Marquette County Road Commission develop an environmental assessment (EA) and work closely with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to minimize and mitigate the impacts that a new road will cause,

Let it further be resolved that staff develop public and private agreements along with public agency to public agency agreements to minimize the design, construction, and maintenance costs to the Road Commission for CR 595 and that those agreements be brought back to the Board for approval.

Additional Motion:

Staff shall contract with legal counsel to develop the written partnerships needed to design, build, and maintain CR 595.

BUDGET:

Staff time will be used to accomplish the Board's directive. The time is currently budgeted in the FY 2011 budget. Money was placed in the FY 2011 budget for legal counsel.